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## 2.5 Analytics Guidelines

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**Synopsis:** Analytics guidelines for State of Georgia web sites.

### 2.5.1 Web Analytics Overview

Website analytics are a series of metrics that help indicate the popularity and success of your web site, as well as a series of user statistics that provide an overall picture of the devices, operating systems, and software your audience uses to experience your site.

Evaluating web analytics is the process of collecting, analyzing, and evaluating data that tell you how well your website is meeting its objectives, so you can make improvements. Analytics evaluation is not a one-time process; it requires an overall strategy of routine evaluation to determine how your audience changes over time, and how successful your site is as it changes or remains static over time.

### 2.5.2 Develop a Plan

You should develop an analytics plan and review and adjust it regularly. Ask yourself and key stakeholders these questions: (from <http://www.digitalgov.gov/services/dap/dap-digital-metrics-guidance-and-best-practices/> [1])

- What do you need to measure? What are your requirements?
- How will you measure it?
- What tools will you use?
- What methodologies are needed to gather the data you need?
- What will you do with the results?
- How will the results help meet the goals for your website and your agency's mission?
- How does the plan fit with your agency's overall strategic and performance plan? How does it aid in the goals of individual program offices?

### 2.5.3 Analytics Tools

There are a number of metrics to measure, and ways to gauge website effectiveness. Some useful tools for analyzing your website include:

**Web Analytics** tools such as [Google Analytics](#) [2], or [Omniure](#) [3] will give a variety of metrics on your users, their hardware and software usage, time spent on pages, which pages they've visited, and what search terms they use to access your website.

**Eye Tracking** tools such as [Crazy Egg](#) [4] give you a graphic picture of where users are clicking on your page. This goes beyond standard analytics metrics to show you exactly what terms and graphics on the page are catching users?

eyes, and which parts of the page are being completely overlooked.



**Customer Satisfaction Survey** tools such as [SurveyMonkey](#) [5] can be set to load a short survey as a user is leaving the website. You can use these to ask users 3 of 4 questions about their visit, if they found what they were looking for, and what it was they were looking for on your website. (See [Measuring Customer Satisfaction](#) [6] at HowTo.gov for more). Surveys can be posted to schedule a survey to load after a certain number of minutes on a site.

**Usability Testing** can be accomplished on a low budget with simple tools such as [FiveSecondTest](#) [7] to gather first impression usability feedback from testers to evaluate the effectiveness of a page layout or campaign.

## 2.5.4 Evaluating Website Effectiveness

**Audience Analysis** - Use a web analytics tool to gather a clear picture of your audience and its needs. Some things to measure and plan for include:

- **Web Browsers** - be sure your website supports the web browsers used by at least 95% of your users. Government websites should not prevent a user from accessing its information because they use an outdated web browser.
- **Screen Resolution** - understand the monitor sizes of your visitors to determine your strategy for web layout and dimensions
- **Mobile** - see what percentage of your traffic comes from mobile devices, and what content mobile users are looking for.

**Audience Goals** - You can also use analytics to determine what your users are looking for on your website, and to some extent, whether or not they were able to reach those goals. Some information to analyze includes:

- **Most frequently viewed pages** - helps to determine what people are looking at
- **Terms visitors type into commercial search engines to find your site** - helps to determine where you are succeeding in your Search Engine Optimization techniques (are people finding your site using the terms you would expect them to use?)
- **Terms visitors type into your search box to find information on your site** - helps to determine what information your users are not finding on their own, and often which topics are most important to your visitors.
- **Top entry websites** - who is referring visitors to you? (Where did your visitors come in from?)
- **Bounce Rate** - the percentage of single-page visits or visits in which the person left your site from the entrance (landing) page.

## 2.5.5 Utilizing the Data

Once you've gathered and evaluated your analytics data, you can use this to develop a clear plan for how to improve on your website. Some questions you may ask when analyzing this data include:

- Which web browsers should my website be tuned for? (Which browsers make up the top 95% of users?)

- What are the keywords I should keep in mind when writing content and setting up meta keywords? (see the SEO section for more on keyword strategies)
- Do I need a strategy for making my content more accessible to mobile users?
- What are visitors looking for? Do I need to update my content to better address these items?
- Do I need to make certain information more prominent to help visitors find it?
- Do I need to write new content to address topics my users are searching for? (For example, some state agencies have found that constituents go to their website searching for topics that are handled by federal or local agencies, so they will write content to address those topics and redirect constituents to the appropriate agencies.)
- Is my homepage geared toward the things my visitors want the most?
- Is the website meeting our Agency's stated goals?

## References

- [HowTo.gov Analytics](#) [8]

## Resources

- [Five Second Test](#) [7]
- [Google Analytics](#) [2]
- [Omniture](#) [9]
- [Crazy Egg](#) [10]
- [SurveyMonkey](#) [5]
- [Popup Booster](#) [11]
- [Sample Framework for the Performance Measurement of Federal Agency Websites](#) [12]

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